

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 5-9 and 14-18 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In the Office Action, claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Claims 1-4 and 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Sakakibara et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 5,617,575), hereinafter referred to as Sakakibara.

§ 112, second paragraph, Rejections - Claims 1-18

The Examiner rejects claims 1-18 for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. The Examiner alleges that the “essential structural cooperative relationships between elements recited in the claims have been omitted.” Applicant amends independent claims 1 and 10, as indicated herein, and submits that claims 1-18 are definite under §112, second paragraph. If the Examiner does not find that these changes obviate the § 112, second paragraph, rejection, Applicant would respectfully request that the Examiner specifically point out the portion of the claims that are allegedly problematic.

§ 102(b) Rejections (Sakakibara) - Claims 1-4 and 10-13

The Examiner rejects claims 1-4 and 10-13 for the reasons set forth on page 2 and 3 of the Office Action.

First, Applicant notes that the Examiner indicates that similar claims are going to be grouped together to avoid repetition. In response, Applicant respectfully points out that each and every limitation of each claim must be taught by Sakakibara to support an anticipation rejection,

submits that Sakakibara does not teach the respective limitations of claims 1-4 and 10-13, and also submits that the Examiner does not address the specific limitations of each of the claims that are rejected as allegedly being anticipated.

With respect to independent claim 1, Applicant submits that Sakakibara does not teach or suggest the structural arrangement of the present invention, as set forth in amended claim 1, as recited herein. That is, nowhere does Sakakibara teach or suggest at least a priority mapper comprising a master device identifier output unit, a bus request receiver, a priority level extractor, and a priority output unit (and their respective claimed functions), as set forth in claim 1.

Yet further, with respect to the rejection of claim 1, the Examiner states, on page 3 of the Office Action, that in Sakakibara, and in any system involving arbitration, each master or requester must carry a priority ID indicating a predetermined priority scheme along with other data. Applicant submits that Sakakibara does not disclose carrying a priority ID indicating a predetermined priority scheme. If the Examiner maintains this argument, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner cite and apply a specific reference(s), and/or point out the portion of Sakakibara that allegedly supports his argument. Yet even further, Applicant submits that even if, *assuming arguendo*, the above is true, it does not necessarily follow that Sakakibara discloses a priority level extractor “for outputting priority level signals indicating predesignated priority levels corresponding to the plurality of master devices, if the bus requests are input through the bus request receiver,” as recited in claim 1. That is, there is no mention or suggestion of this particular limitation in Sakakibara.

Yet even further, with respect to claim 1, Applicant submits that Sakakibara does not teach at least “a priority level extractor for generating a priority level summation signal indicating all priority levels of the bus requests based on the output priority level signals,” as recited in claim 1. That is, the Examiner states “all masters or requesters each having its own level of priority must be ready before arbitration” to support the assertion that Sakakibara satisfies the claimed limitation set forth above starting in the second line of this paragraph, however, the specific limitations of the above-quoted limitation are not satisfied by Sakakibara and the Examiner does not address the particular limitations of the claims.

Applicant submits that independent claim 10 is patentable for reasons similar to those set forth above for claim 1, as claim 10 and claim 1 recite similar limitations. Applicant submits that dependent claims 2-4 and 11-13 are patentable at least by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claims 1 and 10. Further, with respect to dependent claims 4 and 13, Applicant submits that Sakakibara does not teach the particular limitations of these claims, and the Examiner does not address the particular limitations of these claims in the Office Action.

Therefore, at least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-4 and 10-13 are patentably distinguishable over Sakakibara.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. NO.: 09/822,836

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. Q62697

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


Diallo T. Crenshaw
Registration No. 52,778

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE
23373
CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: December 17, 2003